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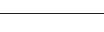
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Council terminates mask mandate

KENDRICK CALFEE
News Editor | [@caftee_kc](#)

Maryville's City Council voted 4-1 to terminate the city's face-covering mandate as of 12 a.m. March 23 — effectively ending the ordinance more than a month earlier than its initially set expiration date.

Immediately after the pledge of allegiance, Councilman Matt Johnson motioned to end the mandate Monday, citing progress he observed in the county. Rachael Martin was the "second" and a five minute discussion followed.

"These types of orders are de-

signed to be temporary, and I think we've hit the mark of the utility of the mask mandate," Johnson said. "I don't regret for a moment the amount of time we had the mask mandate in place; it was absolutely necessary. But I think that time has passed."

Just two weeks ago, at the March 8 City Council meeting, Councilman Jason McDowell motioned to end the face-covering mandate early. At that meeting, his motion went unanswered.

After hearing Johnson's motion and his initial comments, each council member responded with a reflection on the past

year, recounting what the measure curated for the city — the perceived positives and negatives of the ordinance.

Martin spoke over loud music and chatter that seeped through closed doors in a large community center room, which became the council's official meeting place since last December.

Her largest message was a "thank you" to the community for complying with the measure throughout the past year.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
[NWMISSOURINEWS.COM](#)



RACHEL ADAMSON | NW MISSOURIAN
Councilman Matt Johnson motioned to end the city's face-covering ordinance, a measure that passed in a 4-1 vote March 22 at the City Council meeting.

HEERF aid will roll out this week

RACHEL ADAMSON
Editor-in-Chief | [@rachadamsonn](#)

Starting this week, Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II money will roll into students bank accounts. Every student will receive something, except for international students.

The HEERF II money, totaling \$2.4 million, was passed as a federal emergency grant under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act back in December 2020. Payments, which will rollout as early as March 25, are divided up into three tier systems and range anywhere from \$200-\$1,000.

"International students are excluded by law. That's not a decision we made," Vice President of Finance and Administration Stacy Carrick said at the Board of Regents meeting March 18.

The top tier was given to Pell Grant-eligible students who will receive \$1,000. The second tier is for students who have a family contribution of \$30,000 or less and will receive \$450. The third tier is for every other student and comes in at \$200. Around 4,400 students will receive HEERF II aid.

"We wanted to stay focused on the exceptional need," Carrick said at the March 18 meeting.

There is also an option to opt out of the HEERF II fund money if students don't want to receive it. Money will be distributed through direct deposit if the student has set that up through CatPaws. If not, it will be mailed to them in the form of a check.

With the recent \$1.9 trillion stimulus bill passed in March, the University believes there will be more relief provided to students in the coming time as a HEERF III fund.



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest President John Jasinski attended the University's Board of Regents meeting March 18. The Board approved a rate increase for the next academic year and the distribution of COVID-19 relief funds to students.

Board of Regents approves multiyear tuition increase

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | [@andrewwegley](#)

To the annoyance of Regent Jason Klindt — a Republican from Kearney, Missouri, who made his financially conservative ideals clear throughout Northwest's March 18 Board of Regents meeting — the Board approved the proposed rate schedule for the 2021-22 academic year, which includes an increase in tuition and fees for University students.

Northwest's Vice President of Finance and Administration Stacy Carrick presented to the Board the proposed rate schedule, which she said will increase the cost of attendance by an average of \$460 per undergraduate resident and \$480 per nonresident, a figure calculated assuming a student enrolls in 14 credit hours per semester. The Board approved the proposal with a 5-1 vote, with

Klindt being the only dissenter.

While a continued decrease in state appropriations, coupled with an annual increase in consumer price index — essentially a metric that measures cost of living — generally brings about increment yearly increases to Northwest's cost of attendance, a portion of this year's increase is tied to the University's shift to a single tuition rate for both in-person and online students.

Previously, students enrolled in blended or web-based courses at Northwest or its Gladstone, Missouri, campus paid an additional fee to do so. Carrick said the previous format, in essence, placed an additional burden on students taking online or blended classes.

SEE TUITION | A8



RACHEL ADAMSON | NW MISSOURIAN
Ashlee Hendrix, 35, stands in front of her house just a block away from Bearcat Stadium. Hendrix, a 2008 Northwest graduate, is running for one of the two City Council seats in the April 6 municipal election.

Together: Hendrix is running to bridge a gap

RACHEL ADAMSON
Editor-in-Chief | [@rachadamsonn](#)

As her mother-in-law puts it, she has three strikes against her. She's a woman. She's a Democrat. And she's half Hispanic.

She's also pegged on social media as a University elitist — an insult that perhaps serves as the epitome of why Ashlee Hendrix is running for one of the two contested Maryville City Council seats: to bridge the widening gap between the campus and community.

"A crazy person must want to do this, right?" Ashlee Hendrix, 35, said of her bid for a Council seat as she sat in her office on the second floor of Northwest's Administration Building with a sign

reading 'This girl can' sitting just above her head.

Ashlee Hendrix has always been a news junkie. She graduated from the University with a bachelor's in journalism and a minor in broadcast. She met her husband, Mark Hendrix, in Wells Hall when she was a self-described Wells basement dweller, working for Tower Yearbook and Mark Hendrix at the KZLX-FM radio station.

After graduating in 2008, they packed their belongings and made a life for themselves in Olathe, Kansas, where Ashlee Hendrix worked for a handful of small newspapers — the Johnson County Sun and the Lee Summit Journal being among them

Regent nominees donate to GOP

ANDREW WEGLEY
Managing Editor | [@andrewwegley](#)

Missouri Gov. Mike Parson's recent nominees to Northwest's Board of Regents — both appointed as independents to the Board with the maximum four Republicans already seated — have each donated to Republican causes in recent election cycles.

Stephen Coppinger, an independent from Kansas City, Missouri, and Shanda Durbin, an independent from St. Joseph, were nominated to the Board March 3 to fill the seats of former Regents Marilou Joyner, D-Kansas City, and George Speckman, I-St. Joseph, respectively. If confirmed, Coppinger would serve a full term ending in 2027, while Durbin would finish out the remaining two years left on Speckman's term after he quietly resigned last March.

The Board's bylaws permit up to four members from a political party to sit on the University's governing body. With four Republicans already in place, Parson, a Republican, instead nominated two independents with conservative donation histories.

Durbin, the director of human resources at Herzog Contracting in St. Joseph, gave \$1,500 in October 2020 to a political action committee under the same name as her employer, according to The Center for Responsive Politics, a nonpartisan research group that tracks money in U.S. politics. More than 96% of the money Herzog PAC affiliates donated to candidates in the 2020 election cycle went to Republicans.

Durbin, a 2010 Northwest graduate, did not respond to multiple voicemails left in her Herzog Contracting office's voicemail inbox.

SEE EXPOSE | A8

— as a paginator or graphic designer. They always intended on moving back to Maryville, maybe to retire, but when Ashlee Hendrix received a job offer from the University in 2016 as graphic designer, they made their way back to Maryville.

Despite being in the know and working with teams of people on the forefront of news cycles, the recent election cycle was the first time she has ever seen people like herself run for office. It seemed natural for her to run, too.

It was on a jog back in August 2020 when tensions between campus and the community seemed to be at their peak that Ashlee Hendrix had an epiphany. She felt the disjunctiveness and needed to get involved somehow.

"I want to be a candidate that stands in the middle of these two and gets them to work together," Ashlee Hendrix said. "I'm running to help people see each other and talk to each other."

SEE HENDRIX | A8

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Campaigns begin for Senate, election looms

SIDNEY LOWRY
News Reporter | @sidney_lowry

With warmer weather and spring right around the corner, 99th Student Senate elections and campaigning are in full swing. Campaigning began for the 2021-22 school year positions March 22. Elections will now take place online through University emails March 29 through April 2.

Less than a week from elections, Student Senate has not released an official candidate list for who is running in this next election.

The latest information provided to The Missourian by the Senate shows one executive ticket — consisting of president, vice president, secretary and treasurer — running under the slogan of "Innovate." Bailey Hendrickson, who currently serves as secretary for the 98th Student Senate, is running for president. Sophomore Class Presi-

dent Hunter Grantham is running to replace Debraile Patee-Merrill for vice president.

Junior Class Representative Chloe Kallhoff and Sophomore Class Representative Jenna Lee-Johnson are also running on the "Innovate" ticket.

Kallhoff is running to replace Hendrickson as secretary and Lee-Johnson is running to replace senior Connor Thompson as treasurer.

Before running, students are required to go through an informational meeting outlining the campaign rules. Elections Commissioner Senior Sneha Ojha leads those meetings and goes over the positions they are applying for, qualifications, committees and more.

Ojha said that people following campaign guidelines has never been a problem, but informing students on how to campaign correctly is a big factor in getting ready for an election.

"We want to make sure they're campaigning in the right way," Ojha said. "You can't be like 'vote for me.' You have to ask for people to go out and vote."

Students running for office in Student Senate must adhere to the guidelines of campaigning before elections begin. Freshman Class President Joshua Fyffe is running for sophomore class president and said that campaigning in this last election wasn't easy, and he had to figure out how to reach out to his new peers in a new environment.

Campaigning and voting will close at 5 p.m. April 2.

Students will be sent a link to their University emails, directing them to a page to vote on all of the positions available.

Students will be voting for their class representative, on-and off-campus representatives, and the executive board.



MARYANN JOHNSON | NW MISSOURIAN

Executive Secretary Bailey Hendrickson speaks at the March 23 Student Senate meeting in the J.W. Jones Student Union Boardroom. Hendrickson is running to serve as the 99th Student Senate president.

New teachers honored for making an impact on lives



IZIBEL DOBBS | NW MISSOURIAN

Everett W. Brown Education Hall provides education majors with the opportunities and tools they need to become successful teachers. In this building, education majors have access to a full functioning elementary school.

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter | @haileymach98

Northwest students Erin Flehardt and Dimitric Edwards are among several winners of the Missouri Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's Outstanding Beginning Teachers award for 2021.

This award is given out to first- and second-year teachers every other year who have found creative ways to make an impact on students' lives.

Edwards and Flehardt were named to this award during the virtual Missouri Association of Colleges for Teacher Education spring conference March 9.

Edwards received a bachelor's degree in English elementary education in 2018 and his master's degree in education in curriculum and instruction in 2020. He currently teaches English language arts at Truman High School in Independence, Missouri, where he sees

nearly 120 students between 9th and 12th grade daily.

Initially, Edwards said he had no idea about the award and recalled thinking the email containing the news of his recognition was spam. It wasn't until the principal of the school, Ronda Scott, forwarded Edwards the email confirming his selection he believed its legitimacy.

Edwards remembered the heightened emotions and overwhelming sense of joy he felt when receiving the announcement of his selection.

"I just didn't think that being nominated for something like this was ever in the ballpark," Edwards said. "Because in my mind, and what I say all the time, especially to my kids is like, 'I just show up.'"

Edwards said he questioned himself a number of times on why he was selected for the award because he didn't consider anything he was doing to be over the top when com-

pared to other beginning teachers at Truman High. Hearing others inform him of how his students rave about his classes helped him to see why he was given the award.

On top of being a teacher, Edwards is the school's assistant girls tennis coach, and he works with the Strategy Club and the Equity and Diversity Team.

To further recognize his award, Edwards received a large white flag which he hangs across from his desk in Room 205.

"In terms of future success, it reaffirms that, like, what I feel like are the normal day-to-day, it's working; someone sees value in what I'm doing, so you know, 'if it's not broke, don't fix it.'"

Like Edwards, Flehardt recalled believing her nomination was a scam.

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ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

Freshman Madison Monhollen puts an "I got my COVID-19 vaccine" sticker on after getting her first dose of the Pfizer vaccine at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse March 24. Monhollen is scheduled to receive her second dose at the April 14 mass vaccination clinic.

Students receive COVID vaccine, state rolls out next phase timeline

MADELINE MAPES
Assistant News Editor I @MadelineDMapes

Seated in a brown metal chair in the observation area, Madison Monhollen, clad in a Northwest crew-neck hoodie, scrolled through her phone waiting for her 15-minute observation period to end. She had just received her first dose of the COVID-19 Pfizer vaccine, like many other students who had become eligible to get a vaccine at the March 24 mass vaccination clinic at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse.

Monhollen, a freshman elementary education major, said she wanted to get the vaccine for her future students and her brother, who is considered high risk.

"I am mainly just looking out for my future students," Monhollen said.

Monhollen said that she had no concerns about side effects when going to get the shot since she did not have any past reactions to other vaccinations, such as the flu shot.

Monhollen and many other people at the clinic wore a mask to the mass vaccination clinic even though the Maryville City Council lifted the mask mandate March 23.

It should be noted that the University announced in an email to students, staff and faculty that it would continue to enforce the wearing of masks across campus, including the fieldhouse.

President of Mosaic Medical Center - Maryville Nate Blackford said that the hospital supports the city council's decision to lift the mask mandate, but said Mosaic - Maryville will continue to encourage people to wear a mask and use mitigation measures.

"We are turning the corner on

COVID, and I know everybody is anxious to get back to some sense of normalcy and removing the mask mandate is certainly a step in that direction," Blackford said.

He said that at the same time as the mask mandate is being lifted and cases in Nodaway County are dwindling, the hospital will still require masks in the building.

Monhollen is scheduled to receive her second dose of the Pfizer vaccine at the April 14 mass vaccination clinic. Next week's clinic plans are being finalized.

According to the Nodaway County and Northwest COVID-19 dashboards, as of March 21, the latest information available prior to publication, there are 15 current cases in the county, eight of which stem from the University. The seven-day rolling average is one. The county has seen a total of 2,638 cases and 23 COVID-19 deaths.

Blackford said there was not as much of a demand for vaccines when Phase 1B Tier 3 opened March 15. Many vaccine administrators across Missouri sat in similar situations, which led to Gov. Mike Parson announcing a plan to open up Phase 2 March 29 and Phase 3 April 9.

Phase 2 opens up vaccination eligibility to industries that provide equity and economic recovery, which includes higher education. Parson's press release noted 880,000 more Missourians would be eligible.

"The demand was diminishing a little bit, and people (hospitals) were hanging on to vaccines that could have been administered," Blackford said.

In this announcement, Parson

said the state was informed it would see a significant increase in COVID-19 vaccine allotment from the federal government by the first week of April.

According to the Missouri COVID-19 vaccine supply and demand, for the week of March 22-28, all Missouri vaccinators have asked for 254,270 vaccines and only 160,130 vaccines were allocated to Missouri. This means Missouri is receiving roughly 63% of the vaccines it asks for.

Blackford said 110 people were signed up to receive Moderna second doses and roughly 430 people were signed up to receive a Pfizer first dose vaccine, one of those people being Monhollen.

According to the Missouri COVID-19 dashboard, as of March 24 the latest information available, Nodaway County has 23.1% of its population vaccinated with at least the first dose. Nodaway County is still ranked 21 out of 115 counties with the highest total population that has initiated the vaccination process.

Community Health Nurse at Mosaic - Maryville Bridget Kenny said in an email to The Missourian that next week's clinic will be held March 31. The hospital will have a minimum of 560 first dose vaccines or more based on how many people are signed up on the waitlist.

Kenny noted that the waitlist is open to everyone in all phases of the Missouri COVID-19 vaccination plan. When their eligibility opens up, people on the waitlist will receive an invitation to set up an appointment for their vaccine.

University begins plan for normalcy

HAILEY MACH
News Reporter I @haileymach98

Following a year that has been challenging to many, Northwest looks to return to what is considered to be the traditional campus experience.

Students chattering outside of rooms in residence halls, classrooms filled with the scribbling of pen on paper, a loud uproar from Bearcat fans cheering at football games — all of these once nostalgic sounds are envisioned to make a comeback this fall.

The University announced in a tweet March 17 the return of in-person classes, increasing student organization activities and increasing attendance at athletic events.

Matt Baker, vice president of student affairs, said with an increase in COVID-19 vaccinations, a low number of cases on campus and in the community, and a low number of quarantined students in residence halls, he believes

“

I think all of our goals are to return back to like the campus was a couple years ago, maybe with some positive improvements, but we will do it smartly.”

- JAMIE HOOYMAN

this could be the light at the end of the tunnel Northwest has patiently awaited.

"It's impossible to know exactly what's going to be happening four months from now, but all the trends are going in the right direction," Baker said.

Baker said he was joyous at the thought of normal campus life being right around the corner.

Lately, Baker said he has found himself reflecting on where Northwest was a year ago, when the University shifted to a remote experience. He said the constant unknowns and adapting to changes have been the most challenging pieces to the COVID-19 puzzle.

Baker recalled the hardships of decision-making in the past year with having so little information on a novel strain of virus. He stressed the importance of staying in the game and continuing to follow COVID-19 mitigations, even though things may seem to be like "padding through oatmeal."

Looking forward to the fall semester, Baker predicts Northwest will see more activities and fewer restrictions, essentially returning to the campus Bearcats had seen in academic years prior to 2020.

Baker said he can't imagine Northwest going another season without Bearcat football. He also hinted at the high possibility of Greek life, campus recreational programs, residential life programs and campus dining returning to their traditional experiences.

"I hope we retain all the things we learned, but ... also return to the things that we love," Baker said.

Provost Jamie Hooyman also confirmed that Northwest is scheduling to return to normal campus routines this fall.

"I think all of our goals are to return back to like the campus was a couple years ago, maybe with some positive improvements, but we will do it smartly," Hooyman said.

One of the many takeaways Hooyman said the University has learned from the pandemic was how to better use technology, to never take anything for granted and to always stay ahead, be prepared and have a backup plan. Hooyman said that learning this information will help guide Northwest through the next academic year.

Moving through the remainder of the spring semester and summer break, Hooyman advises the Northwest community to stay optimistically cautious.

"I think if we can get it eradicated out of our community, we've got a great shot at fall," Hooyman said.

Other universities in the area have also announced the return of in-person courses in the upcoming school year. Missouri Western State University's president sent out an email Feb. 25 informing students that 85% of fall classes will be held in person.

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Bul Dau inspires success at SAC event

WESLEY MILLER
News Reporter | @wesleymiller360

John Bul Dau watched people die. He was infected with disease, moved across the world and was separated from his family. But Dau didn't let these tragedies change who he was. God never gave up, he said, and neither did he.

Born in 1974, Dau, in his early life, grew up when North Sudan and South Sudan were just one nation. Nine years later, the Arab government of northern Sudan attacked ethnic groups in southern Sudan. The village he grew up in was initially a spot for other refugees of the Second Sudanese Civil War, until one fateful night in August 1987, when the Arab government attacked his village, separating him from his family.

Sharing these stories and more, Dau discussed his path to success through perseverance with a humble crowd of Northwest students March 23.

Dau, one of the 27,000 Lost Boys of Sudan and president of the John Dau Foundation and the South Sudan Institute, was the subject of the film "God Grew Tired of Us." He has won multiple awards, including the National Geographic Emerging Explorers Award. Dau has raised over \$3 million for the Duk Lost Boys Clinic in Duk Payuel, South Sudan, his hometown. Dau spoke of his successes and how he came to be in this position.

"I don't say these things to show off," Dau said.

Dau said he might be "living the dream," but that he didn't come this



Speaker John Bul Dau, sponsored by SAC, gives his lecture on his journey from South Sudan to America March 23 at the Ron Houston Center for the Performing Arts. Dau is one of the Lost Boys of Sudan who was featured in the 2006 award-winning documentary "God Grew Tired of Us."

far just by chance.

"Many times on my journey, I did not think I would survive," Dau said. "But I did because of two things: God didn't give up on me and neither did I."

Dau said it never occurred to him to stop trying. He said that in all the time from when he left his village until he reached the United States, he never asked himself, "What if I just stop here?"

He said to the crowd of nodding students that he knows each one of them have a story to tell, most likely an emotional one. However, he said people often fail to move on from the bad things that have happened in their life.

Dau said he heard a story from his village when he was growing up. He said there was a man who would hunt gazelle for his village every night, because it was the only source of food the village would have. One night, the man went out, but he could not find anything. The man thought to himself that he would quit, even though his village might starve, until he saw a lizard fall from a branch on a nearby tree.

He watched as the lizard tried and failed to jump from one

branch to another multiple times. Then, on the seventh attempt, the lizard made it, inspiring the man to continue his hunt which ended up being successful.

"That is what inspires me to keep going," Dau said. "I don't try once, not twice; I try seven times

“

Struggle is part of the package to success.”

-JOHN BUL DAU

before I tell myself it can't be done or there's another way to do it."

Dau said to the viewers of his presentation to keep going, and to not give up easily just because something bad happens. He said there are a couple things he wants to make sure the audience remembers.

"Don't be held hostage to the

past," Dau said.

Dau said, despite the struggles he faced through his life, he focuses on where he was at that moment and the future ahead of him. He also said that everybody wants to succeed, but there's a key point that many miss.

"Struggle is part of the package to success," Dau said. "Accept it."

Throughout his presentation, Dau spoke of his struggles in his teenage years and how they taught him to persevere. He said those struggles helped him become the person he is today. He credits knowing how to push forward with the conflicts he had in his early life.

He said he talked about that part of his life to show the audience some of the events he had to go through. After the attack on his home village in 1987, Dau spent weeks avoiding armed militia until he reached the town of Pibor Post, now in present-day South Sudan. There, he joined a larger refugee group who started their journey to Ethiopia. In November of that same year, the group made it to an Ethiopian refugee camp called Pinyudu.

After four years at the camp, Dau's group was forced to leave

again due to threats of locals attacking the camp. A group of 27,000 boys walked toward Sudan and the Gilo River. At the Gilo River, they were suddenly attacked by Ethiopian rebels.

"Many could not swim. So many were lost in the water, shot or eaten by a crocodile," Dau said, calm and serious before his audience.

Only 18,000 of the original group made it past the Gilo River. They finally reached Pochala, Sudan, and had shelter, until six months later when the Sudanese government began bombing the area. Dau led 1,200 boys in search of safe territory. Only 800 survived the journey to the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya due to starvation, dehydration and hostile military forces. In Kenya, Dau learned how to read, write and count at the age of 16.

Dau said the teachers would smack the hands of the students with a stick if they made a mistake.

"When I finally became a teacher myself, I did the same to those who had done it to me first as a sort of payback," Dau said to a laughing crowd.

At 17 years old, Dau was chosen to emigrate to Syracuse, New York, and earned a bachelor's degree at Syracuse University. In the early parts of his new life in the U.S., Dau experienced grocery shopping, snow and learning to drive.

Dau reunited with his family in 2005. He said his first time back to his village in South Sudan was very emotional for him. He said he is appreciative of the refugee work done in the U.S.

President of the Student Activities Council senior Brady Netzel helped organize the event. He said it was interesting to learn about the culture shock Dau experienced upon arrival to the U.S.

"To live through his life story was very inspiring," Netzel said.

Sophomore Sydnie Platt, director of lecture programming for SAC, was in charge of bringing Dau to Northwest. Platt said that prior to inviting speakers, she looks at why they speak and what about them would be good to show students at Northwest. Dau fit the ideas they were looking for.

Platt said that for her, his entire message and his perspective through life, including his adaptation to new cultures, was inspiring.

"I saw that no matter what, he wants to help," Platt said.

Stimulus checks now available for adult dependents

MADELINNE MAPES
Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

Some who were struggling financially almost a year ago saw the first round of stimulus funds from the federal government when they needed it most. A lot of people had been part of pay cuts and layoffs as a result of the pandemic that shook the world to its core.

The first two stimulus checks did not include most college-aged students. Now that the third round of stimulus checks has been signed into law, many adult dependents are eligible to receive stimulus money for the first time, providing aid to many students.

Students are now eligible to receive \$1,400 stimulus checks given out by the federal government. These checks are sent to their parents or guardians to be passed on to their dependents if they so choose. President Joe Biden announced

March 10 that he would be signing the American Rescue Plan into law, which provides stimulus checks to roughly 85% of Americans, including some adult dependents.

Northwest Director of Financial Assistance Charles Mayfield said that students who did not receive stimulus checks the last two times may qualify for the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, which comes from the same government funds as stimulus checks.

"My impression was most college-age students — students above either 16 or 18 — were kind of carved out of that eligibility for those stimulus payments," Mayfield said.

According to the IRS, people can be claimed as dependents as long as the person being claimed is younger than the person filing the taxes and is under the age of 19, or is considered a student under the age of 24 years old.

There are three eligibility requirements individuals and families can meet in order to be eligible for the \$1,400 stimulus check.

According to Forbes, the IRS uses one's tax filing status and their adjusted gross income from a person's latest tax return. The article states individuals and their dependents are eligible for the \$1,400 stimulus check if they are an individual with an AGI of up to \$75,000, an individual that is the head of a household with an AGI of up to \$112,500 or if a couple is filing jointly with an AGI of up to \$150,000.

The article also explained that dependents must make a gross income of less than \$4,300 for 2020, not including Social Security benefits and tax-exempt incomes.

Mayfield said he was unsure why college-aged students were not eligible for receiving stimulus

funds the first two times. He said the only rationale he could come up with was that since the point of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund was to help universities support their students, it would make up for students not receiving stimulus checks, but he said he is merely speculating on the federal government's guidelines.

Mayfield said this round of stimulus checks and HEERF are both allocated from the funds that are part of the \$1.9 trillion plan Biden signed March 12.

Vice President of College Democrats Tyler Bears said he recently received his stimulus check.

Bears said he wished that students had been eligible for stimulus checks the first two times, but is thankful that students are eligible for the third round of stimulus payment.

He noted that he also wished that the funds had been \$2,000

instead of \$1,400, which was originally pushed by Biden during his campaign.

"That was a campaign promise a lot of (Democrats) were banking on," Bears said.

According to the American Rescue Plan Fact Sheet provided by the White House, the third round of stimulus checks combined with the \$600 checks people received December 2020 totals to the promised payment of \$2,000.

It should be noted that changes in eligibility may mean that some people who were eligible for the \$600 stimulus check may not be eligible for the \$1,400 check, meaning that they will not receive the total \$2,000 that was promised. The income limits changed for this round of stimulus checks, according to Forbes. People are not eligible for the \$1,400 stimulus checks if they are an individual with an adjusted gross income of \$80,000 or more, the head of a household has an AGI of \$120,000 or more or they are a part of a couple filing jointly that has an adjusted gross income of \$160,000 or more.

Bears said that he thought it was silly that students and adult dependents were not eligible for the first two rounds of stimulus funds. He said he believes that it hurt a lot of people financially, especially those who may not be financially stable.

One example Bears gave was that some people who are not financially supported by their parents, but are claimed as a dependent on their parents' taxes, were left to struggle when the pandemic hit.

"Because of that, they are essentially upstream without a paddle, and it really hurts them," Bears said.

He said that situations like this are very detrimental to students' economic health, which begins to affect their mental and physical health.

Bears said that for some students, receiving a stimulus check means being able to afford groceries, rent or utilities.

"What it means is just another opportunity to hopefully breathe and be able to survive through all of this," Bears said.

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Men need to step up, stop sexual violence

NATHAN ENGLISH
Opinion Editor
@nathan_english



Men have done a poor job. This statement in itself can be applied to a multitude of topics, but specifically, men have done a poor job stopping sexual violence. We need to do better.

The recent mass shooting in Atlanta underscores the tolerance and even encouragement of misogynistic ideology. The depraved individual that took the lives of eight people, six of whom were Asian women, March 16 said his motive for the heinous crime was the removal of temptation. He blamed women for his "life of sin" and decided that killing them was a good solution.

I, like many others, was appalled by his "reasoning," but when I thought about what he said, I realized I shouldn't have been shocked at all.

In society, we have created a culture where women are blamed for the actions of men. Minority women are even more likely to be victims of sexual violence as they are more likely to be objectified.

I have seen firsthand how the education system props this up. I saw how women in tank tops and sports bras in high school were forced to change because they were "distracting" others around them from their education. Meanwhile men, myself included, would wear tank tops and cut-offs with seemingly no repercussions. These dress code violations further perpetuated the idea that "boys will be boys" and my female classmates' outfits are somehow responsible for the actions of my male classmates.

It's not just schools, either; it's religious organizations.

The shooter's roommate described the shooter as a Christian who was ashamed of himself for his sexual addiction.

The shooter had been to a Christian clinic to treat his addiction and had taken measures often recommended by prominent evangelicals to curb his addiction, like getting rid of his smartphone.

I myself am a Christian — although I loathe to often be associated with the small-mindedness that often accompanies that label — and I have heard many of these treatments prescribed to help those "living in sin."

I have just as often heard those who are supposed to be examples of Jesus spout sexism from a pulpit.

I have sat in church on Sunday mornings and listened to a "men of God" speak about women's obligation to not lead men to temptation and the "need" for women to be modest.

In the Bible, Jesus's disciples ask him what they are supposed to do if what a woman is wearing causes them to look on in lust, his response, "tear out your eye."

Men need to start noticing patterns in other men's behavior and calling them on it. Too often do we let little comments and other misogynistic actions go unchallenged.

Thousands of memorials were made for the victims in Atlanta, and perhaps one of the most powerful images came from a little white sign surrounded by bouquets of flowers. Written in all-black lettering it said, "MALE SILENCE IS VIOLENCE."



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN

OUR VIEW:

Removal of mandate means we can focus on other things

The most divisive action the Maryville City Council has taken since the beginning of the pandemic is no more. The mask mandate was revoked after a 4-1 vote Monday — Tye Parsons was alone in his opposition — and as of midnight that day, there was no city face-covering requirement.

It's sad that this became political, but perhaps getting rid of the mandate will help in one respect: the upcoming elections won't be bogged down by the mask question.

First, we should be clear. It should come as a surprise to no one who has kept up with the writings of our editorial staff in this last year that we are very pro-mask. Science shows that masks reduce the spread of COVID-19, and areas that have mask ordinances, on average, have fewer cases of the coronavirus per 100,000 citizens, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

We also do not believe that being required to wear a mask is a violation of civil rights, just as seatbelt laws are not either. It's a common-sense regulation designed to protect everyone, but as is evident by the outcry, the simple act of wearing a piece of cloth to limit the spread of a deadly virus was just too much for some.

The writing has long been on the wall

for the end of the mandate. The initial ordinance passed unanimously in July 2020, and since then, the support for the mandate on the Council has fluctuated depending on cases at the moment. It was extended rather easily from November 2020 to January of this year at a time when cases were spiking. However, in the most recent discussion on the issue prior to its revocation Monday, the Council narrowly declined to extend the mandate in a 3-2 vote March 9.

Many locally see that we are on the downhill side, which is understandable from a certain respect. Every week the amount of vaccinated people in Nodaway County grows, and while there have been some recent spikes in cases, there hasn't been near the level there was in August or December 2020.

It wouldn't be the first time, though, that we believed we were out of the woods only to see cases spike again. Although, even if the current Council had declined to end the mandate, it would have limped on for another two weeks before being dismantled anyway.

All four candidates for the two open Council seats in the upcoming April 6 election have stated they would not support re-upping the mandate. Even if all those who voted for it prior to Monday stuck to their positions after the election,

the mandate still would not pass. Now, voters can focus on the issues that will affect Maryville long after COVID-19's hopeful eradication.

Council terms are three years. Even by the most cautious estimates, mask-wearing and COVID-19 will be long gone from anyone's mind by 2024.

We can now look at what candidates believe is the best solution for the water issue and downtown revitalization. The issue of face coverings won't be the giant elephant in the room that every candidate has to address, or the issue that they try to pander to the voters on.

Yes, it's ridiculous in the first place that masks became political. It's ridiculous that there was even opposition in the first place. The pandemic has shown us the absolute depths of dissonance and idiocracy people will go to avoid helping others because it's a slight inconvenience for them.

This editorial staff believes in science and in wearing masks. We still plan to wear them in public and are still required to wear them on campus.

There is some solace in that those opposed to the mandate — specifically those vehemently so — will be forced to make decisions in the upcoming election based on something more than a scientific fact twisted into a political issue.

YOUR VIEW: Do you agree with Maryville getting rid of the mask mandate?



OLUMAYOWA OMOLADE
Junior
International Business

"I think it was important to keep it. It kept people safe. Now that the mandate is gone, I will still keep wearing my mask off campus and on."



MORGAN WALL
Freshman
Psychology

"I feel it's a little irresponsible of Maryville to lift it after we've made all this progress, and now it will be all gone."



ALANI DELCE
Freshman
Pre-vet

"I'm definitely a little worried, especially since students like to go out, like, to party. Makes me a little worried."

THE STROLLER: Your Bearcat loves military recruiters

I avoided military recruiters like the plague in high school, and I thought that while I was in college I wouldn't have to deal with anyone trying to trick me into dying in the desert for a barrel of oil, but luckily for me, there's even more of them on campus.

The recruiters take advantage of the price of tuition to insert themselves as an alternative. They operate much like a used car salesman from St. Joseph when they offer you the "best deal" on a car. With both, the decision could lead to an untimely death. The recruiter will talk to their boss to negotiate, too, except unlike the used car salesman, the recruiter will send you halfway across the world to some desert for reasons that nobody really understands anymore.

Some days they're outside of the Union playing bags with some sucker they've reeled in like a fish, and other days they are at their stand inside hoping to entice

someone to approach their information table and leave three hours later. I always have to do the same thing; I put my headphones on and pretend I don't hear them.

They talk to me, of course, but I just quicken my pace. It's not as bad as when they text me. They slide into your DMs like an ex-boyfriend who got a new number because the old one is blocked. I'm really glad that they gave a 30-year-old trying way too hard to relate to me my phone number so they can tell me about the secret way to pay for my tuition that definitely won't involve being shipped overseas.

I respect those who honorably serve our country, but I can't help but feel differently about some random schmuck that they send to schools to borderline-harass people into joining the military.

The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.

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your name, address and telephone number. Letters should be 150 and 300 words and sent to r.adamson@

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HENDRIX

CONTINUED FROM A1

Ashlee Hendrix is walking into local politics at an interesting time, where background city officials have been thrust into the forefront with concerns of the pandemic. She commends the City Council for helping to lead the city through the first year of the pandemic, but said it's time to get new people into the rotation.

The Council — made up of five members — currently seats four men: Jason McDowell, Ben Lipice, Matt Johnson and Tye Parsons, and one woman: Rachael Martin. McDowell and Johnson are not seeking reelection. In a town with a makeup of nearly 52% women, Ashlee Hendrix is the only woman in the running to replace them.

"I think I can really help and make change happen in our city," she said.

Ashlee Hendrix's husband, who moved to Maryville when he was in fourth grade, serves as her campaign manager. He briefly thought about running himself before deciding that Ashlee Hendrix was the best possible candidate he could name.

Mark Hendrix, the University events coordinator, puts most of his efforts toward talking to people — it's what he's best at. He uses his resources and campaigns for his wife, who fell in love with the town long after he had.

"My wife amazes me," Mark Hendrix said. "She blows me away with her passion for this city. I'm ready for her to be put into that spotlight of showing off her passion."

Ashlee Hendrix, a St. Joseph native, has poured herself into getting established in the community since her return almost five years ago. She started a family here. She raised \$2,100 for mental health initiatives in the county as a part of the 2021 St. Francis Foundation Gala. She's the chapter adviser for Alpha Sigma Alpha, which she was a part of during college. She's president of the Wesley Foundation board and involved with the Methodist church. She lends her talents in graphic design where she can with local businesses and downtown promotions.

From her involvement, Ashlee Hendrix sees a need that she wants to push for if elected to the Council: a communications person. She said this position would allow both the city and campus to seamlessly work together and promote local

business during events like Family Weekend.

"Maryville has things to do, and it's fun and vibrant," Ashlee Hendrix said. "It takes somebody communicating that intentionally, and it's difficult if there is nobody putting that information out."

On the limelight issues that pushed the City Council to the brunt of much pushback from residents, Ashlee Hendrix supports the Council's decisions so far. In a town of nearly 12,000 people who may or may not believe in the number of lives lost to the coronavirus and how it relates to them, Ashlee Hendrix supports the Council's March 22 decision to drop the mask mandate. The politics of the mask outweighed the science of it.

"I will continue to wear my mask until they (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) tell me to not wear my mask," Ashlee Hendrix said. "I feel like we have to give people a break and find that compromise."

Ashlee Hendrix supports all efforts to address water taste and odor issues stemming from Mozingo Lake, the city's main water source. She sees the value in the South Main Corridor Project. And she advocates for local businesses.

"I've got their back 100%," Ashlee Hendrix said. "This has been a tough year. I think the Council has been lacking in really throwing their support to small businesses."

Shortly after Ashlee Hendrix's campaign launched, Mark Hendrix noticed people calling out her voting history on social media. For a non-partisan April 6 election, Mark Hendrix didn't see why that mattered.

"They look at an issue like the mask mandate and just throw her out. Or that she's a registered Democrat, they'll throw her out just because of that," Mark Hendrix said. "We are not going to get better as a community if we are just looking at blue and red."

She's a woman. She's a Democrat. She's half-Hispanic. Her mother-in-law said she's scaring the hell out of Maryville. But she's running to bridge a gap.

Ashlee Hendrix knows what the "keyboard warriors" have to say about her campaign. But she's not stopping there. She has a race to run.

"I'm not weak," Ashlee Hendrix said. "Don't pigeonhole me into this category because I'm not what you think I am."



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Alongside Assistant Vice President of Finance Mary Collins (right), Stacy Carrick (left), the assistant vice president of finance and administration, presents proposed rate increases to Northwest's Board of Regents at its March 18 meeting. The increase will cost the average on-campus student an additional \$460 in the 2021-22 academic year.

TUITION

CONTINUED FROM A1

The method was initially implemented because only those students used Canvas, a learning management platform now used by all Northwest students.

Carrick said the shift allows for increased flexibility for Northwest students, who will now pay a flat rate to enroll in in-person or online courses rather than shelling out extra money during semesters in which they enroll in web-based or blended classes. Carrick told the Board that 83.7% of undergraduate students enroll in a web-based, blended or Northwest-Kansas City course — though that figure includes Kansas City-based undergraduate students, which Carrick said inflated the total.

"When we consider this in March, as we have every year that I've been on this Board, it always lends itself to the end result, which is that we find that we need to raise tuition," said Klindt, who was appointed to the Board in 2018. "Especially this year — you know, I get the argument that this is the way it's always been done in higher education — but maybe this is the year to think about whether that's wise or not."

"My worry here is — why do we need to do this today? I understand that we have to lock it in for students, but I just — every time I've been on this Board, we have raised tuition. Every single year. And it's almost become routine, that it's not really a big vote; it's just a part of the vote we take. And I'm very concerned about that trend long term."

After Klindt concluded his monologue that lasted more than three minutes, Regent Chair John Moore — with the vocal support of Regent Mel Tjeerdsma — noted recruitment benefits that come with voting on tuition increases earlier in the spring before handing the floor to Carrick, who provided a polite dispute to Klindt's dissension.

"It is critical for us to get (tuition rates) out," Carrick said. "We are packaging today with projected rates, but the issue ... is it's hard to land that student, and we have to repackage if we change rates and don't keep it timely. And so the later we wait, we lose those students."

Carrick also noted the restrictions replaced on COVID-19 relief funds that require the monies be spent a certain way. After the meeting, Carrick told The Missourian that much of the relief funding Northwest receives amounts to student aid and reimbursement. Additionally, Carrick said annual restrictions placed on rate increases by the Missouri Senate force Northwest's hand in upping tuition costs at incremental rates despite the availability of relief funding.

The Board ultimately passed the measure Thursday, but it did not do so without protest from Klindt, who has continued to show a willingness to vote against his colleagues on the governing body and whose grievance with the proposal had less to do with the increase itself and more to do with the fiscal traditions of Northwest and higher education as a whole.

Klindt, a 1999 Northwest gradu-

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EXPOSE

CONTINUED FROM A1

Durbin, a 2010 Northwest graduate, did not respond to multiple voicemails left in her Herzog Contracting office's voicemail inbox.

Coppinger, the president and founder of Kansas City-based furniture dealership Impact Interiors, gave \$500 to Josh Hawley's U.S. Senate campaign in 2018, in which Hawley defeated incumbent Democrat Claire McCaskill. Both Hawley and Coppinger went to Rockhurst High School, a private, Catholic, Jesuit school in Kansas City.

In an interview with The Missourian, Coppinger described himself as mostly nonpolitical altogether, guided more by his lived experiences than any party affiliation. A 1998 graduate of Northwest, he said he was invited to a campaign party by a friend and fellow Rockhurst alumnus and felt obligated to donate to Hawley's campaign.

"I mean, I don't think that changes my outlook on life," Coppinger said in a phone interview. "I think Josh Hawley — in his recent portrayal of himself — is not who I would support anyways."

It's unclear if Parson's office was aware of the pending regents' donation histories when he nominated Durbin and Coppinger to the Board earlier this month. The governor's office did not respond to The Missourian's media request including specific questions about Parson's intent in nominating Durbin and Coppinger.

Reached by email, Kelli R. Jones, the governor's communications director, said only, "I do not have any record on the official side about political donation history." Several follow-up emails seeking clarification on whether or not Parson's office was aware of the donor history went unanswered, though state Sen. John Rizzo, a Democrat from Missouri's 11th district, said the governor's office completes thorough background checks on gubernatorial appointees.

Rizzo, who represents Independence, Sugar Creek and Northeast Kansas City and who serves on the state Senate's committee gubernatorial appointments, told The Missourian March 16 that the committee — which vets the governor's nominees to more than 200 boards and commissions — places the greatest emphasis on a nominee's character, rather than any perceived party affiliation.

The next step in the confirmation process of Durbin and Coppinger is their respective appearances in front of the gubernatorial appointments committee. Rizzo said nominees must first receive a letter of support from the state senator representing their home district, who will then appear alongside the nominee in front of the appointments committee.

Coppinger said he's already met with and received support from Sen. Greg Razer, a Democrat representing Missouri's 7th Senate district. Sen. Tony Luetkemeyer, who represents Buchanan County, where Durbin resides, did not respond to a media request seeking comment.

Rizzo, elected to the Senate in 2016 and assigned to the gubernatorial appointments committee in January, said the donation history of Coppinger and Durbin might pique the committee's interest, but likely wouldn't result in the sinking of their confirmations. When he spoke to The Missourian March 16, Rizzo had yet to receive information about the recent nominees to Northwest's Board.

"It'd probably come down to other factors," Rizzo said in a phone interview. "I wouldn't contend (a nomination) on that solely — on that alone. We're also talking about, you know, 'What kind of activism have they had?' Republican to independent, Democrat to independent is a much easier jump than Republican to Democrat, Democrat to Republican."

Board of Regents Chair John Moore, an independent from Raymore, said he isn't bothered by the partisan donation history of the pair of independent nominees — largely because partisan politics rarely come up in Board deliberation. Moore, appointed by Parson in 2018, said he expected the nominees to be confirmed to the Board, where they're set to provide needed depth after the University's governing body narrowly passed a tuition increase March 18 in a 5-1 vote.

"My experience with our kinds of boards — not all boards in the state — but our kinds of boards is that if you've made it to the point where you've been nominated, your chances of actually being approved are very good," Moore said.

Moore himself was appointed to fill the seat of Matt Kitzi, a Democrat from Columbia who was nominated by former Gov. Jay Nixon in 2016. Kitzi was never confirmed by the Senate.

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COACH
CONTINUED FROM A12

Her firsthand experience with the girls excites Obley for next season, and she's grateful to give back to her hardworking team in a higher position.

Obley credits the girls' spirit and enthusiasm for making Albrecht's method of coaching work. The structure he introduced and the girls' determination paved the way for the team heading into its post-Albrecht era.

"These girls we've had in the program come into the gym every day and work hard to get the program to where it is now," Obley said. "I'm excited to be able to continue building on that. We didn't end the season how we wanted to, so I think the girls are going to come hungry and motivated to finish what we have our sights set on."

As her future as Maryville girls basketball's new matriarch approaches, Obley wants to improve her players off the court as much as she does on it. She wants her players to succeed in the classroom and

away from school as a whole. One of the biggest things that will help her succeed is a trait she picked up from Albrecht, she said.

"I think the biggest thing I learned from (Albrecht) was how to be a good communicator," Obley said. "I think that communication is the foundation. He has always been a great communicator regarding all things basketball. His resignation wasn't a surprise to me because he communicated that."

The now-former Spoofhounds' coach is excited to see what Obley can do with the team and said she's ready for the new challenge. He hopes the community will allow her to be "the coach that she is."

Albrecht may be finishing his career as a high school coach, but that doesn't mean he's finished being a fan of the sport. Being a regular listener to 97.1 The 'Ville and other sports broadcasts, he plans on enjoying high school sports from a perspective he hasn't in 32 seasons.

Despite having jerseys turned into him earlier than expected this season, he leaves the school knowing he fixed something that was broken. Now, he can enjoy his re-



TUCKER FRANKLIN | NW MISSOURIAN

In a Missourian 2019 file photo, now-former Maryville girls basketball coach Quentin Albrecht stands on the sideline of a Spoofhounds' game in the 'Hound Pound. Albrecht announced his resignation as coach March 17 at the Maryville R-II Board of Education meeting.

tirement with no regrets.

"I wish I could've done a little more for the girls, especially the seniors, to get a taste of success in Springfield," Albrecht said. "It's a

tough task, but I'm not leaving with any regrets, to tell you the truth. I've always tried to do the best I can do, and that's all a person can do."



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Junior guard Trevor Hudgins dribbles into the paint in the first half of Northwest's 21-point semifinal win March 24 over West Liberty at the Ford Center in Evansville, Indiana. Hudgins scored 23 points in the matchup.

Hawkins said. "We had a week to prepare for it. We just stuck true to who we are and what we do defensively, and we slowed them down quite a bit to give them enough fits."

"I don't think there's any rocket science to guarding somebody; you just have to be active, guard the basketball, keep them out of the paint," McCollum said in the aftermath of the Bearcats' domination of Liberty. "I thought our kids were up for the challenge."

Despite the large margin of victory, something the Bearcats have done throughout most of the season, the game was different than anything they've encountered. No other team in the country played defense against the Bearcats the way Liberty did.

The Bearcats held the duo to 13-28 from the field (46%), including 33% from 3-point range.

It was different for the Hilltoppers, too, in the sense that no team had dominated them as Northwest did for the entirety of 40 minutes. The Bearcats gave Liberty a different look than it had come across all season.

For the Bearcats, an unfamiliar foe wasn't an issue. They were able to adjust. For the Hilltoppers, an unfamiliar foe was their kryptonite. Their season is now over.

"Neither of us have played outside of our region. They play a different threat to us with the press that we don't see ever," McCollum said over Zoom, where all Elite Eight postseason press conferences are hosted. "They don't see a lot of half-court teams like us ever. It's just such contrasting styles. It's

kind of a battle of wills and who's gonna win, and we're fortunate enough to do it."

While Liberty will start preparing for next season, the Bearcats will be preparing to come out on top of this one. Northwest will face the winner of the matchup between No. 3 Flagler and No. 6 Truman State. That game hadn't concluded in time for publication.

The Bearcats are now one win away from a national title game, along with two wins away from winning the program's third Division II championship in the past five seasons.

"Onto the next," McCollum said. "Gotta find a way to be able to win the next game and just survive — survive and advance."

Bearcats prepare for outdoor track season

WESLEY MILLER
Reporter | @wesleymiller360

Indoor track and field season is over, meaning outdoor track and field season is upon the athletes at Northwest.

After a seven-meet indoor season, which ended with 12 athletes finishing with All-America honors, the Northwest track team is preparing for another seven-meet outdoor season.

The Bearcats will first compete in the Emporia State University Relays March 26-27 in Emporia, Kansas. This meet will be followed by the Southwest Baptist University Bearcat Invite, the Wichita State Open, the Midwest Classic and the 111th Drake Relays in the consecutive weeks after, before heading to Pittsburg, Kansas, for the MIAA Outdoor Championships May 8-9.

The Northwest track team is coming off an indoor season in which it met Division II provisional marks 26 times and multiple Northwest records were broken. Now, the Bearcats restart with hopes of matching and surpassing that success.

Junior Randi Overkamp, who hit Division II provisional marks in the women's long jump during the indoor season, said her success from indoor season is extra fuel going into the outdoor season.

"I saw some nice times and marks, which is always a great feeling, but I can't be satisfied," Overkamp said.

Overkamp qualified for the na-

tional championships during the indoor season but was unable to go due to COVID-19 restrictions. She said this has given her even more motivation for the beginning of the new season.

"I was so close to being able to go indoors," Overkamp said. "I can't miss it again outdoors."

Junior Caroline Cunningham

said she feels strong and confident for the outdoor season after the indoor season, where she was part of the women's distance medley team that broke the Northwest record twice in the same season.

"The success indoors helps me to get excited for the different events and opportunities that outdoors has to offer," Cunningham said.

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HUDGINS
CONTINUED FROM A12

A day ahead of the Bearcats' matchup with West Liberty in the Elite Eight, Hudgins became the fourth Northwest player to earn NABC All-America honors. A few hours after that, he was named the 2021 Division II Conference Commissioners Association Ron Lenz Player of the Year. That, of course, landed him on the organization's All-America first team.

Earlier this season, Hudgins won MIAA Player of the Year, marking the second consecutive season he's been named the league's best player. With that, Hudgins received first-team all-MIAA honors for the third straight year.

The awards aren't new to him, though. In his first season as the starting point guard at Northwest, Hudgins was named the MIAA Freshman of the Year. In that same season, he helped the Bearcats bring home the program's second national championship. Hudgins was named the Division II Elite Eight Most Outstanding Player after recording 12 points and six assists in the title game.

As a sophomore, Hudgins was tabbed as the MIAA Tournament Most Outstanding Player, as well as a finalist for the Bevo Francis Award, which is given to the best small college basketball player of the season.

He already has one national title on his resume. If the Bearcats win the program's third national title this weekend, he'll have that to add as well, along with the possibility of another Elite Eight Most Outstanding Player award.

HAWKINS
CONTINUED FROM A12

Prior to the Elite Eight, he's second on the program's all-time scoring list with 2,015. Former teammate Justin Pitts awaits Hawkins at the top of the list with 2,459. Hawkins is now one of six players in the MIAA to ever score at least 2,000 points.

The senior forward is second on the program's list for 3-pointers made in a career with 273, adding to his laundry list of notable statistics. He trails now-assistant coach Zach Schneider for first on that list (370).

"I know I'll never catch Zach Schneider," Hawkins said Dec. 5 after moving to No. 5 on the all-time list during the Bearcats' 84-54 win over Lincoln. "There's not enough extra years of eligibility for that to happen."

Hawkins is a two-time national champion, two-time MIAA Defensive Player of the Year and tallied the first triple-double in MIAA Tournament history when he tallied 30 points, 11 rebounds and 11 assists in the Bearcats' semifinal win March 5 against Central Oklahoma.

He's reached nearly every accolade there is when it comes to basketball. He's putting his post-graduation life on hold to add to that list.

"It says that he gets it. I mean, to be able to play college basketball, and be in college, for as long as you can possibly be there, as long as you're continuing to get educated, those are great years of your life," coach Ben McCollum said about Hawkins. "Why be in a hurry to get into the real world and do that sort of thing when you can play college basketball, be on scholarship and be educated and be with your buddies every day? It just shows that he's got it together."

Baseball remains winless after four games

THOMAS TURNER
Missourian Reporter | @NWMSports

After finding success the weekend prior, Northwest baseball didn't find any in its three-game series with Pittsburg State March 20-21 at the Bearcat Baseball Field.

The Bearcats dropped all three games to the Gorillas. Northwest is now 0-4 this season against Pitt State.

In the first game of the doubleheader March 20, Pitt won by a score of 7-1 after scoring six runs in the eighth inning. Junior pitcher Max Spitzmiller took the loss after going 7 1/3 innings while allowing seven hits and five runs. He struck out eight in the game.

"Pittsburg State did a good job of getting his pitch count up," Northwest coach Darin Loe said. "Max was great for most of that game;



Northwest junior batter Jacob Pinkerton hits safe on first base as Pittsburg State junior infielder Garrett McGowan falls short on catching the ball in time March 21. The bearcats lost all three games this weekend to Pittsburg State, moving their overall score down to 6-9.

they just were very patient hitters."

The Bearcats combined to have four hits in the game. Their only run came from senior first baseman Connor Quick, who delivered with an RBI groundout. Northwest batters were struck out seven times in the first game.

In the second game of the doubleheader, Northwest once again had the lead going into the later innings but couldn't come out with a win. Pitt scored two runs in the eighth and ninth innings to come back from a 3-1 deficit to win.

"It was definitely disappointing when we could have taken one or even both games of the doubleheader," Northwest junior shortstop Jacob Pinkerton said. "It was tough, but that is baseball, and you got to

play nine innings to win. We didn't press on the gas, and it caught up with us."

"One of the main things we want to have is the energy and confidence to come back when we are down," Quick said. "We have gotten away from having tons of energy in the dugout and having fun playing baseball. Right now, it seems we aren't having fun right now, and when we are, it makes us a different team."

Junior pitcher Spencer Hanson was tagged for five hits and four earned runs through seven innings pitched. Sophomore pitcher Alex Slocum relieved Hanson but couldn't get out of the jam in the eighth inning. Pitt then delivered with a two-out, two-strike single to

give the Gorillas a 4-3 lead.

Northwest managed five hits. Junior outfielder Matt Gastner was the only Bearcat to provide a multi-hit day for the team.

In the final game of the series on March 21, the Gorillas combined for 10 total hits and won the game 9-2. Northwest had seven hits, with Pinkerton and sophomore third baseman Brett Holden recording two each.

"I tend to hit the low pitch well, and I looked for that most of my at-bat," Pinkerton said. "Most of the time, I'm focused on staying loose up there, and it will all fall into place."

Freshman starting pitcher Zach Wiese went six innings, gave up seven hits, six runs and five walks.

'Hounds make outdoor track debut after losing last season to COVID-19

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbz

It's been more than a year since the Spoofhounds circled the crimson course outside of Maryville High School. As spring sports make their debut after being shut down last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Maryville track athletes are looking to avenge the season they lost.

Coach Rodney Bade is ready to finally make the transition from cross country to track and field.

"After losing last year, we're obviously excited and optimistic," Bade said. "I'm sort of cautiously optimistic, I would say. I know that things are going well, but the pandemic has gone on long enough that any day you could get a call that ends it all."

After dealing with an entire cross country season hoping for his athletes not to test positive for the coronavirus, Bade is prepared to do the same for his track and field athletes. With the season beginning March 24 at the Maryville Time Trials, Bade used the first meet to scout out what kind of athletes he has.

This year's team hosts a large group of unproven athletes, as sophomores join the freshmen in competing in their first high school track season.

"We're looking to see what kids



have potential in which events," Bade said. "Sometimes a kid could turn it on at a meet and show something we haven't seen in practice. We just kind of want to get a feel for where everybody's at and just get the season going."

The performances put on in the first meet are not at the top of Bade's priority list. He understands that there are a lot of athletes who haven't competed in a while, so he plans to limit the pressure from the meet.

This season will look a little different in terms of the number of athletes. On the girls side, Bade looks forward to welcoming a larger freshman class, one he hopes will produce big in championship meets. Bade said his focus for both sides will be the MEC Championship meet right before districts, but he hopes for more.

"If everything goes well, I'd like to see our girls be in the top three in the conference meet," Bade said. "I hope we can get a couple individual qualifiers and a relay to the sectional meet. Hopefully, we can get a couple girls to the state meet as well."

For the boys, Bade is a little disappointed in the decrease in numbers this season. He highlighted the lack of numbers will make it difficult for the boys team to score a lot of points in championship meets. Bade will look to the distance squad for a majority of the points. Af-

ter finishing third at the MSHSAA Class 3 Cross Country State Championships this fall, runners are motivated to continue their success in the spring.

Although senior Garrett Dumke was disappointed with his race at state, he's using it and his former classmates as motivation to keep improving himself. Dumke finished eighth at the aforementioned championships, despite severely rolling his ankle a day before competition.

"I'm motivated to go out this season and give it all I have," Dumke said. "Just thinking about how the seniors last year didn't get their season has been motivating me and all the other guys."

"The third place was a little bit of a validation," Bade said. "That's been motivation for them to train together all winter. They now have more individual goals other than the (4x800-meter relay team), but they are definitely pushing themselves."

Bade said for some meets, the boys who ran cross country will have to compete against each other for competition. Additionally, they'll have to find out what event to specialize in, as there's more than one race available, whereas there's only one in cross country.

For Dumke, he'll be shifting down in distance, causing him to focus more on the speed aspect of running rather than endurance. One race he's looking forward to, sim-

ilar to his coach, is the 4x800-meter relay: an event that Maryville excels in yearly.

"Last year, we had a really solid 4x800 team," Dumke said. "Most of our guys have put in the hard training, and we want to keep that dynasty of having a great 4x800 team."

Prior to the canceled 2020 season, Maryville had finished in the top five in the relay three years in a row.

It's far too early in the season for athletes to be thinking of the state championship. For now, Bade wants to take the season one meet at a time

UP NEXT

NW vs. Newman
2 p.m. March 26
Wichita, Kansas

The Bearcats' defense produced three double plays and have cut down errors as the season has gone on.

"We have been putting a lot of focus on defense in our practices," Pinkerton said. "As a unit, we are focused on one out and one pitch at a time. We are getting better with continuing to play solid throughout the game."

Northwest falls to 6-9 on the year and 5-7 in MIAA play, while Pittsburg State is now 10-5 and 7-5 in MIAA.

Both coaches and players were quick to remind themselves and others to move on to the next series.

"We mentally need to rest," Pinkerton said. "I also think that these games were good for us because we played solid ball, but we didn't finish. We now know what to do better, and we will be fine later on."

"We have to continue to play hard," Loe said. "We can't let a weekend like that carry around us. Have a short memory and don't worry about it, and just move on to the next game."

That game will be played March 24 against nonconference opponent Washburn, a team that is 6-10 on the year. That game hadn't concluded in time for publication. Following that game, Northwest will travel to Wichita, Kansas, to play a three-game series with Newman March 26-27.



JOSLIN WYATT NW MISSOURIAN
Junior Sloane McAdams competes in Girls Long Jump at the Maryville time trials hosted by Maryville High School March 24. McAdams jumped a distance of 3.269 meters during her first jump. The Spoofhounds' next track meet will be held at Cameron High School March 30.

UP NEXT

MHS vs. Lathrop
4 p.m. March 30
Lathrop High School

and help his athletes reach their potential. With no indicator of what his athletes will do this season, he will have to see how his team responds once competition starts.

"The goal this year is to keep kids happy and healthy," Bade said. "I just want kids to show up to practice excited."

Northwest soccer goes three weeks without competing in a game

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbz

Northwest soccer is finding ways to stay in game day shape as coach Marc Gordon is continuing to search for opponents to play during the Bearcats' three-week break. However, no schools have reached out to Gordon with intents to play the Bearcats.

As these few weeks roll on before Northwest's conference schedule kicks off April 2 with a rematch against Central Missouri, the 'Cats will be competing against their own practice gear. After their first unofficial bye week, Gordon is pleased with the results.

"Week 1 was productive and successful," Gordon said. "We made our own games, and we wanted to create a lot of competitiveness internally. It's hard to duplicate a match without outside competition, but I think the team is getting a hold of it."

Gordon is incorporating weekly scrimmages in order to mirror a regular schedule. Every Thursday, the team will practice as it would if the Bearcats were having a regular game the next day. On Fridays,



ANDREW WEGLEY NW MISSOURIAN
Freshman Kaylie Rock maneuvers past Missouri Western's Elizabeth Musilek in Northwest soccer's draw with the Griffons March 12 at Spratt Memorial Stadium in St. Joseph. Northwest isn't scheduled to play again until April 2.

Gordon will pit the Bearcats against each other in situations that will highlight their strengths, as well as their weaknesses.

Senior midfielder Madi McKeever likes her coach's plan to simulate actual competition through her teammates. Although these pseudo-matchups don't hold the same level of intensity, she finds it important for the team to get these types of practices.

"I think these scrimmages are

helping us," McKeever said. "Any little bit of game-like situation can help us. In a way, they can get boring. There's a little bit of difference in intensity, so when you get to play those other games, you get to go all out."

Gordon's main focus with these scrimmages is to keep the women in a competitive state and fit enough to back up their competitiveness.

"Your best you against your teammates draws the best out of

both," Gordon said. "This leads to more success and preparation for when we can have matches. Everybody is fit and on the hook to make sure everybody is putting forth their best effort."

One factor in a team's success is motivation. With the team not preparing for a game at the end of a week, practices can turn into mundane workouts. Gordon reminds the girls that he understands the difficulty in not playing games. However, he says the thought of having a game in the near future keeps the 'Cats motivated.

After its fall season was canceled, Northwest learned how it feels to have an uncertain future. Now that spring has rolled around, hopes of playing are high, even though the Bearcats have to wait a while.

"I think what helped us was quarantine," McKeever said about waiting to play again. "With quarantine, we didn't play for over a year, so now it's only three weeks. We were able to stay motivated then, so now we're able to stay motivated when we have a game scheduled."

Along with motivation, team morale is important in a team's success. This is something McKeever

UP NEXT

NW vs. UCM
3 p.m. April 2
Bearcat Pitch

said has been great recently, despite the lack of matchups.

"I think we have great morale, and it's really helping us," McKeever said. "We had a great week last week; the energy is the best we've seen in a while and we're in good moods. Everybody is ready to work, ready to play, and we're excited to go to practice every day and get better."

Northwest has waited a while to get a chance to host a team on its new pitch and will have to wait a little longer. Nonetheless, the wait doesn't change Gordon and the Bearcats' approach each week, as they close in on the rematch against the Jennies.

"We're not going to change too much heading into the month of April," Gordon said. "There's nothing more beneficial for match fitness than to actually play a type of match. Of course, it's internal, but that's our focus."



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

Freshman Kristen Ford and junior Hannah Koechl go to bump the ball during the second set of three against Missouri Western in a three set sweep March 17 at the Bearcat Arena. After a match against Washburn March 20, the Bearcats moved to 6-2 overall and 3-2 in the MIAA North standings.

Softball struggles at Hy-Vee Classic, loses three of four

KESTON OLTMAN
Sports Reporter I @KO_12_14

In its final non conference games of the season, Northwest softball dropped three of four games in the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic March 20-21 in St. Joseph.

The Bearcats (6-6) got off to a sluggish start in the March 20 matchup with the Upper Iowa Peacocks, losing 3-2. Upper Iowa struck first, scoring one in the bottom of the first inning.

Northwest tied the game in the top of the second inning on sophomore Jacee Winn's single, driving in sophomore Ady Watts. The Peacocks took the lead right back in the bottom of the second, scoring two on freshman Abby McKay's solo home run and junior Amanda Williams' double that scored sophomore Kaylee Frenette.

The game remained 3-1 until the top of the seventh inning, when Northwest freshman Raven Defrain's single drove in senior Kaitlyn Weis to cut the lead to 3-2 with two outs. The Bearcats couldn't complete the rally and lost 3-2 a few pitches later.

The Bearcats had a short break before taking on No. 14 Winona State. The Warriors made short work of the Bearcats and won 8-0 in a five-inning game. The Warriors were led by a solid pitching performance from senior Jordyn Kleman, who gave up three hits and no runs in her four innings of work before handing the ball to freshman Emilee Erickson, who gave up one hit before closing the game out for the Warriors.

Northwest struggled to drive runs across the plate, leaving 20 runners left on base over the two games March 20, something coach

Ryan Anderson said has affected the team all season.

"That's been the story of our three weeks playing," Anderson said. "We haven't pounded the ball like I know we can. We're finding ways to get on base, and then we're not scoring."

After a tough couple of losses March 20, the Bearcats were back in action March 21 against Bemidji State.

Northwest scored four in a big first inning that left the Beavers scrambling early. Bemidji State used a Lexi Derrick solo home run to bring the game to a 4-1 Bearcat lead, but Northwest continued to pour it on in the third, fourth and fifth innings, scoring five more runs to end the game in the fifth inning for a 9-1 Bearcat win.

The Bearcats' offensive explosion was led by freshman Abby Nolte, who tallied three hits, two RBIs and a home run in the game.

"Before this weekend, I haven't really been hitting the best," Nolte said. "I just felt more comfortable this weekend, like, getting back into my mindset. High school and tournament ball felt different; I'm just more relaxed, and I'm just starting to get back into the groove of things."

Northwest finished the Missouri Western Hy-Vee Classic with a 7-0 loss to Minnesota State. The Mavericks were aided by a complete game shutout from freshman McKayla Armbruster, who allowed six hits while striking out four batters.

Northwest's pitching struggled, giving up 17 hits in the loss. While the hits piled up for the Mavericks, the Bearcats managed to limit Minnesota State's run production.

"They were ground balls; we want our pitchers to get ground balls," Anderson said. "It was the weak ground ball up the middle. Normally, if a team has 17 hits, they're scoring 13

Bearcats drop match to Ichabods, miss on sweep

CALVIN SILVERS
Sports Reporter I @CalvinSilvers

No. 17 Northwest volleyball went on the road March 20, looking to complete a series sweep of No. 19 Washburn for the first time since 2018 and move two games ahead of the Ichabods in the MIAA North Division.

Washburn (9-3) came into the contest with different ideas, capturing its fourth straight victory with a 3-1 decision. The Bearcats (6-2) remain second in the MIAA, with a conference record of 3-2, and the Ichabods sit below them with an identical conference record.

Northwest coach Amy Woerth wants the loss to motivate her squad in the final six games of the regular season, hoping it will ignite her team to create a cushion in the standings.

"I think there's some definite fire that can be lit from the standpoint of beating them the time before on our home court. But more than anything, we're just going to focus on us improving the areas we struggled the most in on Saturday," Woerth said. "Just from the standpoint of focusing on the process, I think is the most important thing,

then trying to use a lot of emotion to guide us from that standpoint."

A change of personnel from the Ichabods in the third set, after a Northwest victory in the second set, kept the Bearcats' offense in check. The switch from Washburn allowed them to block better at the net and took the momentum away from the 'Cats.

The next obstacle for the Bearcats is the Washburn Crossover March 27, in Topeka, Kansas. These crossover events were implemented this season, allowing MIAA teams in the North Division to compete against teams from the South Division. These events are the only way for these kinds of matchups to take place in the regular season.

The crossovers are not mandatory, and the decision to hold this type of event involves coaches across the conference coming together. Coaches are then allowed to decide whether they would like to participate or not.

"I think playing more games is better, and we're normally used to playing everyone in our conference home and away. So, from that standpoint, I think it's a positive that we get to play the oth-

UP NEXT

NW @ Washburn Crossover
12 p.m. March 27
Topeka, Kansas

er division," Woerth said. "It's going to prepare us for our post-season conference tournament that we're having, so I think the more that we play, the better we will get.

Northwest will get a taste of the top and the bottom of the MIAA South Division. The first matchup for the Bearcats is against No. 25 Central Missouri at noon. The Jennies currently sit atop the South Division.

The Bearcats won't have much time to catch their breath, as the second contest is against Pittsburg State at 4:30 p.m. The Gorillas are second to last in the South Division, and lost to Northwest in three sets Feb. 20.

Bearcat sophomore setter Alyssa Rezac said playing back-to-back will require more help from the bench.

FULL STORY ONLINE:
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM

UP NEXT

NW vs. Northeastern State
12 p.m. March 26
Talequah, Oklahoma

nement this weekend, and they got beat by the team we run-ruled (Bemidji State). You know, that kind of gives us a little bit of hope, because we beat Bemidji and Bemidji beat Rogers State," Nolte said. "If we're in the game and we're hitting the ball and we have a solid defense, I think we can beat any team that we're up against — or at least give them a good fight."

runs. We still got out of innings."

Northwest now turns its attention to conference play with double headers on the road against Northeastern State March 26 and Rogers State March 27.

The RiverHawks (14-8) brings a lot of power to the plate, totaling 25 home runs, 122 RBIs and a team batting average of .310 so far this season.

"They're always hard to play at their place," Anderson said. "They play different at home; they have some big sticks, and some kids that are swinging the bat well this year. They don't have a hole in the lineup right now."

Rogers State (12-6) doesn't

bring the same power to the plate as the RiverHawks, totaling 88 RBIs and a team batting average of .286. However, the Hillcats have a solid pitching staff, holding opponents to 41 runs on the season with an average ERA of 2.23.

"They throw pitches to hit, but they rely on the chase," Anderson said. "They want to get ahead, and they want you to get yourself out. If they're gonna throw strikes, we gotta attack it."

Now that the non conference schedule is complete, Nolte said Northwest is excited to get underway in the MIAA.

"Rogers State was at the tour-



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Hudgins named NABC player of the year

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @tByJonWalker

Trevor Hudgins, despite only being a junior, has a laundry list of accolades that most athletes dream of.

His latest honor came March 24, when the NABC named him the Division II Player of the Year, making him the second Bearcat to win the award. Hudgins' predecessor, Justin Pitts, was the first Northwest player to earn the honor back in 2017, when he led Northwest to the program's first national title.

Prior to the Division II Elite Eight in Evansville, Indiana, Hudgins averaged 20.1 points and 4.7 assists per contest while shooting a nation-best, regardless of NCAA level, 52.5% from beyond the arc. He was the only Northwest player to play more than 1,000 minutes throughout the first 27 games of the season.

SEE HUDGINS | A9



JON WALKER | NW MISSOURIAN
Northwest men's basketball junior guard Trevor Hudgins was named the NABC Division II Player of the Year March 24. Hudgins is the second Northwest player receive the award, with the first being Justin Pitts in 2017, when he led Northwest to the program's first national title.

Back on track

Maryville prepares for return after missing 2020.

see A10

Washburn woes

Northwest falls to No. 19 Bodie in MIAA matchup.

see A11

Men's basketball senior decides fate for next season

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @tByJonWalker

This week's Division II Elite Eight won't be the last time one Northwest men's basketball player takes the court. Senior forward Ryan Hawkins is planning to return to the program next year to exercise his final season of eligibility, he said after the team's practice March 19.

"I have to finish my degree here, so," Hawkins said. "I'll have my master's done this spring, but yeah, I plan on coming back."

The NCAA Division II Management Council announced Oct. 20 that winter sport student-athletes who competed this season would receive an extra year of eligibility due to COVID-19 impacting the end of the 2019-20 season, along with it altering the landscape of the

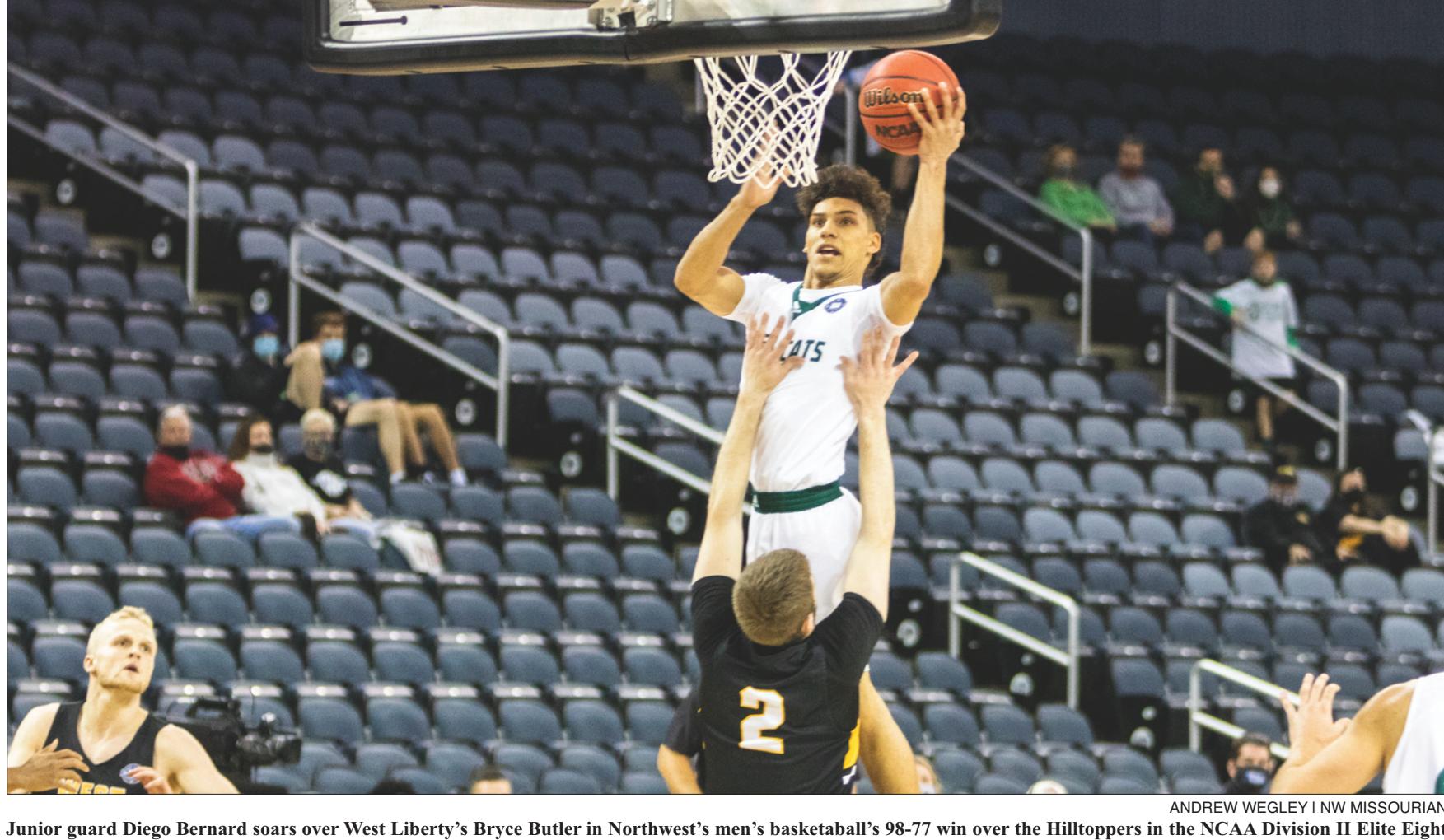
2020-21 season.

Hawkins is hoping to use that extra season to aid the Northwest men's program in another national title run.

"I'm coming back because I love the core group of guys. I love the school. I love the town," Hawkins said. "I've had a really good experience so far in college here, and why leave something as beautiful as this program and this institution?"

Hawkins is at the top of the program's all-time rebounds list with 913. He's the only Northwest basketball player ever to reach the 900-rebound mark. He's one of only four active NCAA basketball players, regardless of level, to record at least 2,000 points and 900 rebounds.

SEE HAWKINS | A9



ANDREW WEGLEY | NW MISSOURIAN

Junior guard Diego Bernard soars over West Liberty's Bryce Butler in Northwest's men's basketball's 98-77 win over the Hilltoppers in the NCAA Division II Elite Eight in Evansville, Indiana. Bernard put up 14 points in 22 minutes in the matchup, helping send the Northwest to the semifinals.

THRIVE AND ADVANCE

Bearcats blowout
Hilltoppers 98-77,
move onto semifinals

JON WALKER
Sports Editor | @tByJonWalker

vance to the Final Four.

"It's win or go home at this point, so you have to bring your best," Northwest senior forward Ryan Hawkins said in the aftermath of the 21-point quarterfinal win. "We weren't at our best to start, but we got it corrected and went a little bit of a run there in the first half."

For the first few minutes of the game, it was everything Liberty (18-5) wanted it to be. The Hilltoppers used their typical full-court press to try and speed up the Bearcats, who traditionally run a slower-paced, efficiency-based offense.

It worked for the first few minutes, too, as Liberty led Northwest 12-8 with 13:39 remaining in the first half.

After that, not so much, as Northwest (26-2) used an 11-0 run over the next 3 minutes and 24 seconds to take a 19-12 advantage. The Bearcats took their first lead of the game when freshman guard Isaiah Jackson got a layup to go with 11:24 remaining in the first half.

SEE ADVANCE | A9

Girls basketball coach retires, leaves program to assistant

CORBIN SMITH
Sports Reporter | @curly_corbs

The last six seasons for Maryville girls basketball have been some of the best years in the program's history under the supervision of coach Quentin Albrecht. Now, the Spoofhounds will look to continue that upswing of success without Albrecht at command.

During Maryville R-II's Board of Education meeting March 17, Albrecht announced his resignation from the girls basketball head coaching position.

"I started here at Maryville six years ago, so I just thought it was time for me to hand the reins over to someone else," Albrecht said. "I started in 1988 and I've done everything I've wanted to do. It's time for something else."

As the Spoofhounds' coach, Albrecht posted a 84-65 record in six seasons. In his final three seasons, Maryville was 59-17 and appeared in a district championship game each year, winning it in the 2019-20 season. The season prior to Albrecht's arrival, Maryville failed to win a game.

Albrecht explained that his resignation wasn't impacted by this season's loss to Benton in the district championship game, nor was it impacted by the loss of senior leaders Emily Cassavaugh and Serena Sundell. Although he thoroughly enjoyed working with the girls, the clock simply ran out on his desire to coach.

"Honestly, I thought I would be a short-timer when I took this position," Albrecht said. "I think around Christmastime, I started thinking

about this year being it for me. It takes a lot of time, it takes a lot of effort, it takes a lot of energy to do things the way I like to do them. This is a young person's game, and I'm not young anymore."

Despite never reaching a state championship, Albrecht is pleased with the team's status as he steps away from it. He accomplished what he set out to do for the less-than-functional program he acquired and wanted to hand the team over to somebody that appreciated the position as much as he did.

Coaching to Albrecht means more than just barking orders on the basketball court; it means putting an immense amount of effort and energy into players, which he feels the new coach can do. Assistant coach Kelly Obley will be taking the reins from Albrecht, and he couldn't be

more pleased with his successor.

"Obley was ready to captain the ship and I was ready to leave, so it was good timing," Albrecht said. "I think that the program will continue to grow under coach Obley. She has a tremendous amount of energy. She loves basketball, she loves being around young people and she's a great teacher."

Albrecht believes his retirement won't do much damage because he, alongside Obley, has built a sustainable program. The team performed at least once without Albrecht this season and still found a way to win.

Obley, who is sad to see Albrecht leave, appreciated the good relationship the two coaches shared.

"These past five seasons have been some of the greatest," Obley said. "He has taught me so much about how to build a program, run

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It's a tough task,
but I'm not leaving
with any regrets.”

-ALBRECHT

basketball drills and build relationships with the people of the community. He's been a really important mentor for me, and I've loved having the opportunity to work for him."

Obley will be taking over a different team from what Albrecht received in his first year, but will have the chemistry Albrecht didn't.

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